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Rhee's Proposed Asian Anti-Communist Front

A second South Korean mission left Seoul on 10 February for tour of Southeast Asia to promote militant anti-Communist program in Far East.

This program originated in Rhee-Chiang talks -- Taipei, late November.

- Joint Rhee-Chiang statement, 29 Nov.

called for free Asian governments and peoples to organize Far East anti-Communist front, with U.S. logistical support.

First mission sent out in December under George Paik - toured SEA to sound out reactions to proposed conference to lead to Far East anti-Communist pact.

Second mission left Seoul 10 February under Choi Duk-sin to visit 6 SEA nations - ostensibly to firm up plans for effective Far East alliance before asking U.S. aid.

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- May be motivated by distrust of George Paik, regarded too pro-U.S.
- May be to sell idea of keeping Japan out of any Far East alliance or front of this sort.

Rhee plans large-scale anti-Communist program -- these missions only a part of plan:

- Has ordered U.S. -made transmitters capable of covering entire Far East for propaganda (could be anti-U.S. , anti-Jap, anti-Indian, as well as anti-Communist)
- Has offered (28 Jan.) to send 1 ROK division to Laos - contemplates making offer public to buttress program.
- Plans Spring Conference of FE, SEA nations.
- Wants Magsaysay to head up Asian anti-Communist front (with Rhee covertly in control)

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- Magsaysay opposed to this now -- has  
had little experience in foreign affairs;  
is preoccupied with domestic problems.

Reactions to Rhee plan cool for the most part.

Chi Nats - want Magsaysay to lead, but feel

Rhee pushing too hard

- want Magsaysay to call conference  
of FE countries - including Japan - at  
Baguio.

Burma - fears offending Communist China --

has no regular diplomatic relations with  
P.I. or ROK.

Indonesia - Independent foreign policy, will  
avoid leaders in Asia involved with U.S.

Thailand - Competitor of Magsaysay for

leadership of SEA, might not want to  
join a Magsaysay-headed group.

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Thai reliance on UN for solution security problems.

Japan - Rhee opposed to Japanese participation. Japs sensitive on rearmament; unlikely to join FE military arrangement. Suspicious of any China-Rhee sponsorship.

Associated States - Paik mission visited during gap between Tam and Buu Loc governments.

Viet Nam cool to idea of Rhee intervention.

French unwilling gratuitously offend Chi-Coms.

Adds up to general unwillingness of FE nations to accept Rhee as their international spokesmen.